

Safety Bulletin

A serious incident has taken place



Continuing near misses with track workers

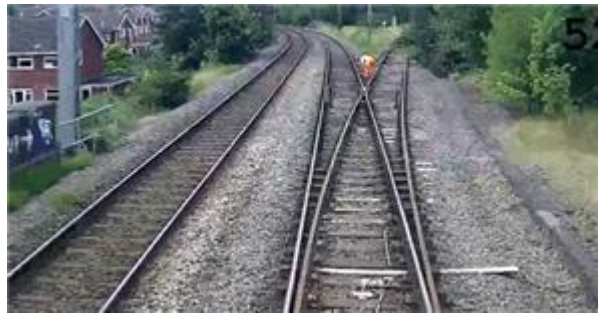
Issued to: **Network Rail line managers, safety professionals and RISQS registered contractors**

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Overview

On 15th August in Lichfield, Staffordshire, a train driver observed a person wearing orange PPE, crouching in the four foot. The train was travelling at 20mph (linespeed). The driver of the train sounded his horn and the individual moved clear of the line.

The member of staff in the four foot was a patroller and was alone on track at the time of the near miss. The patroller had been part of a larger group of five who had just completed a patrol using planned protection. The patroller returned to the track on his own following the report of a fault

The initial investigation has identified the following:

- The first patrol was completed under planned protection.
- A fault had been identified which caused patroller to go back to rectify.
- There was no protection in place for the return to the track.
- The patroller returned to the track alone.
- The patroller was working the 14th day of continual duty.

This incident follows a number of reported near misses over the last 2 months across the rail network.

- On 31st July, at Finsbury Park Junction (Eastern), two track workers were slow to move to a position of safety and were only clear of the train three seconds before it passed them.
- On 31st July, near Swale (Southern), there was a near miss with three track workers working under lookout protection. The driver sounded his horn and the train narrowly missed striking the group.
- On 15th August, on Bentley AHB level crossing (Eastern), a group of workers were slow to move clear of the line (100mph line speed).
- On 16th August, near Norwood Junction (Southern), an empty coaching stock train narrowly missed a group of 7 track workers who did not move to a position of safety.

Discussion Points

- Always be sure the required plans and permits are in place before you start a job or go on or near the line.
- What methods do you personally use to manage fatigue?
- Where would you raise concerns about excessive working hours?
- Every person in our organisation must ask, in my role;
 - "How am I responsible for my own and others' safety?"
 - "How do I influence others (positively and/or negatively) in relation to work demands?"
 - "Am I prepared to be open, honest and, if necessary, intervene to ensure my own or others' safety?"
 - "How will my team's safety conversations make it clear that no person working for or on behalf of Network Rail is permitted to work without a suitable safe system of work?"